

# COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

TOM DAVIS, CHAIRMAN



## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

For Immediate Release  
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### **Government Reform Committee to Examine Homeland Security Coordination in Capital Region**

*GAO to Report: First Responder Grant Management Lacking*

**What: Government Reform Committee oversight hearing:  
“Target Washington: Coordinating Homeland Security Efforts With Local  
Jurisdictions in the National Capital Region”**

**When: JUNE 24, 2004, 10:00 A.M.**

**Where: ROOM 2154, RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING**

#### **Background:**

Among its duties, the Department of Homeland Security, created in the wake of the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks, is responsible for evaluating national preparedness programs and providing resources to improve and sustain preparedness. Given the Washington region’s nature as an obvious terrorist target, however, the Department has the additional responsibility for coordinating federal programs and domestic readiness initiatives for state, local and regional authorities within the National Capital Region.

The region is home to 12 local jurisdictions, two states, and the District of Columbia, each with its own police force and emergency plans but all using the same roads, bridges and mass transit system. In the Homeland Security Act of 2002, Congress established the Office for National Capital Region Coordination (ONCRC) within DHS, recognizing the vulnerability of the region and the many governmental entities involved. The ONCRC was created to help coordinate activities between the region and federal government.

The Committee held hearings on April 10, 2003 and October 3, 2003 to examine the state of emergency preparedness in the National Capital Region. In light of witness testimony and recent events, Chairman Tom Davis requested the U.S. General

Accounting Office (GAO) examine the budget and spending plans for the NCR in hopes that it would help Congress identify whether this region is sufficiently funded and whether the funds are being used effectively and efficiently. This hearing will examine the findings and will allow key players of the region to address the sufficiency of resources to handle security threats, coordination of emergency responses, and other issues regarding emergency preparedness and response.

According to GAO, in fiscal years 2002 and 2003, the NCR received about \$340 million from 16 grants administered by the Department of Homeland Security, Health and Human Services, and Justice. In a region with many jurisdictions, intergovernmental coordination is crucial. Coordination among the federal, state, and regional agencies and the private sector in the NCR is necessary to ensure adequate planning, information sharing, training, and execution of domestic preparedness activities among these agencies and entities. **According to GAO, such coordination is currently lacking.**

Through this hearing, the Committee hopes to move the ball forward in terms of improving the federal-state coordination in this critical area.

**Witnesses:**

**Thomas Lockwood, Director, Office of National Capital Region Coordination, U.S. Department of Homeland Security**

**William O. Jenkins, Director, Homeland Security, U.S. General Accounting Office**

**George Foresman, Deputy Assistant to the Governor, Commonwealth Preparedness, Commonwealth of Virginia**

**Dennis Schrader, Director, Office of Homeland Security, State of Maryland**

**Barbara Childs-Pair, Director, D.C. Emergency Management Agency, District of Columbia**

**Anthony H. Griffin, County Executive, Fairfax County, Virginia**

**Mary Beth Michos, Fire Chief, Prince William County, Virginia**

**James H. Schwartz, Director of Emergency Management, Arlington County, Virginia**

**Dr. Jacqueline F. Brown, Chief Administrative Officer, Prince George's County, Maryland**

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